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ABSTRACT

Elements of educational quality and ways in which quality is estimated are identified, with specific attention to conditions that are prerequisite to achieving high levels of quality in universities. The quality of a university may be estimated by examining prestigous institutions based on reputational studies, by quantitative descriptions of selected institutional characteristics, or by an extension of both methods in what has been called an eclectic or holistic approach. These three approaches imply different understandings of quality. The reputational method treats only the academic department. Institutional characteristics through which excellence might be observed in universities include clarity of purpose, the degree of autonomy, the staff, and resources. The holistic/eclectic approach may permit confusions between primary and supporting functions in describing the quality of a university. It is possible to estimate the degree of clarity of an institution's purposes by examining the awareness evidenced by societal leaders, faculty, and students. The quality of a university seems to improve as its autonomy increases, since autonomy of action is necessary to achieve its central purpose. (SW)

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EDUCATIONAL QUALITY: NOTES FOR THE FUTURE OF THE AMERICAS

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EDUCATIONAL QUALITY: NOTES FOR THE FUTURE OF THE AMERICAS

Administrators of educational institutions are responsible for ensuring that programs of high quality are developed and offered under their leadership. It becomes necessary, then, for administrators to concern themselves with the dimensions of that ephemeral characteristic called "quality." The task of this paper is to identify the elements of that characteristic in educational institutions, and to describe some of the ways in which "quality" is estimated. In addition, I expect to comment on some of the conditions that are prerequisite to achieving high levels of "quality" in educational institutions.

The question of "quality" is ubiquitous in contemporary society the world over. Commercial firms are concerned with the "quality" of their products and services; public agencies are frequently disvalued because of the absence of "quality" in their services; governments are evaluated by friend and foe alike by the "quality" of their performance; and the worth of cultures is described in large measure by the "quality of life" afforded individuals within them. I am confident that the future of the nations in the western hemisphere, in the Americas, will be impacted either positively or negatively by the degree of "quality" that characterizes each of these dimensions. It is not surprising to look to the "quality" of education then, in such a litany, for the manner in which we are able to enhance the quality of educational programs bears directly on all other elements of our societies. The relationship between quality

societies and educational programs is well recognized and needs little further comment in this context.[1] It's significance is sufficient to claim our attention.

My frame-of-reference for this consideration is institutions of higher education--colleges and universities. Although the educational community is clearly much broader and more inclusive than the post-secondary sector, and the university is but one element in the tertiary level of the educational structure, it seems reasonable to be concerned with the element of the educational system that historically has been most influential. I speak of "influence" within the parameters of an educational system in this instance. If, for example, both the teachers of the primary and secondary levels and the teachers of those teachers are prepared by colleges and universities, it seems the better part of wisdom to assume that "quality" in the university could well establish patterns of quality throughout the educational system. Consequently my attention is focused on the university with the assurance that the considerations that follow might well be pertinent in other educational institutions.

The role of universities in our several nations provides further support for this focus. Individuals who earn or assume leadership positions in our governments, our industries, indeed, in our societies, most frequently are products of our universities. As higher education serves

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[1] For an example of contemporary attitudes regarding the relationships between education and societies, see No Limits to Learning: Bridging the Human Gap by James W. Botkin, Mahdi Elmandjra and Mircea Malitza. (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1979). 94-97.

broader segments of the population in each of our nations, this characteristic becomes more evident. Hence, our concern for the quality of our universities is both legitimate and timely.

My examination of the "quality question," follows. It commences with a review of the definitional issue--what does "quality" mean in the context of an educational institution--specifically the university? Can the characteristics of "quality institutions" be identified? To attempt this, I shall describe characteristics of the university and then present selected descriptors of quality factors. It is expected that they might serve as aids to practicing administrators in all the Americas.

On the Meaning of "Quality"

The common usage of the term tells us that a "quality" of something is a characteristic, a property, or an attribute of that entity. The term is used to describe the character of something with respect to its fineness or degree of excellence. "Quality" is also used to designate something of high grade, such as high social status. When used in conjunction with an organization such as a college or a university, the term refers to a generalized set of characteristics that are either inherent in the organization or have been acquired by it. For our purposes, we understand "quality" to refer to such a set of characteristics. These characteristics represent the distinguishing and identifiable elements of a given type of post-secondary institution (the university, in this examination), and are understood as characteristics that may be observed in differing levels of excellence. It should be emphasized, then, that "quality" as a descriptive term be understood in this discussion as representing a continuum

that ranges from "low" to "high" degrees of excellence, although I will not attempt to define the units of such a scale.

There are other ways to help clarify the meaning of "quality" when used in conjunction with colleges and universities. One such example was presented by Millard in a discussion of assessing the quality of innovative graduate programs in the United States.[2] He suggested four definitions: first, a non-definition in which "quality is an ineffable characteristic of something" that you either do or do not have; second, "quality is what all people ... agree upon," a social consensus; third, describes quality as an ideal model, a single paradigm to which all colleges are compared; and lastly, Millard suggests that "quality" be understood contextually, in which it incorporates "... the idea of a paradigm but places the paradigm within the activity or object itself as involving its effectiveness according to type. Quality is thus 'achievement in kind.'" The fourth definition includes the sense in which "quality" is understood for our purposes.

It is clear that university quality is a complex and multi-dimensional attribute. It involves the beliefs, values, and traditions of the participants as well as the culture in which the enterprise is embedded. There are varieties of purposes attributed to and assumed by higher education, a complexity that goes far beyond that which resides in primary and secondary educational institutions and systems. Therein the purposes--

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[2]Richard Millard, "Assessing the Quality of Innovative Graduate Programs," in Keeping Graduate Programs Responsive to National Needs. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1984). 41-43.

social functions--are more nearly agreed upon in terms of basic skills and general education, while specializations in the university beget an ever-increasing set of objectives. Whose objectives shall be predominant in describing the quality of a university? Or shall it be necessary to consider a description of quality that encompasses all? This is but one example of the complexity involved in the "quality question."

Methods of Estimating Quality

The meaning of "quality" as it is used in contemporary higher education can also be inferred from the methods commonly used in its measurement. There are three methodological approaches to the description of quality in higher education. The most commonly used approach can be called simply the reputational method: that is, an institution has "quality" to the degree that people think it has. This is accomplished by asking reputedly knowledgeable faculty members and administrators to rate or rank departments of their own specialities in universities other than their own. One often used procedure is to provide the participating individuals with a list of universities being included in the study and to request that the departments of their speciality be ranked from strong to weak. It is assumed that the respondents, customarily senior professors and/or administrators, are knowledgeable about the status of their speciality. It is also assumed that the respondents know what factors characterize "quality" in their disciplines or specialities. Note that these factors remain unspecified. Critics claim that such a procedure can, at best, provide an index of "prestige" rather than an estimate of the "quality" of the department.

Such inadequacies in "reputational assessments" have lead to attempts to identify significant characteristics of high prestige departments in the expectation that quality factors would then be revealed. Because such attempts have focused on characteristics that could be described quantitatively, this approach has been called the quantitative method. It is customary to utilize data so developed to produce and report correlation coefficients, a technique that does not allow the inference of cause-effect conclusions. Such methods, although providing more descriptive information than the reputational approach, still ignore potentially meaningful characteristics, specifically, those that are difficult to express as quantities. For example, the faculty-student ratio by academic fields is readily available data in most institutions, but the substance of the interactions facilitated or inhibited within those relationships by the institution remain largely unquantifiable.

A third methodological approach, in an attempt to treat this omission, focuses attention on the whole institution by attempting to incorporate measures of all available and quantifiable characteristics as well as the purpose or mission of the institutions and the purpose of the "quality" assessment exercise itself. Such an approach has been called the holistic or eclectic method. It is much more comprehensive and complex, and although numerous examples exist in the literature of the reputational and quantitative methods, few (if any) full-fledged examples of the holistic method have been identified.

Quality, in its contemporary usage in higher education, most frequently refers to prestige, as determined by the reputational method.

When its synonym, "effectiveness" is used, one must assume that a quantitative approach has been utilized or, perhaps, a partial holistic approach is signified by the inclusion of an assessment of institutional purpose, goals, or mission. Furthermore, it should be noted that the three approaches imply different understandings of "quality" itself. The reputational method, for instance, clearly treats only the basic organizational unit in the university, the academic department. At least, this is the case with the major reports in the United States that have been published to date.[3] The assumption of the purpose of higher education is clear, and few would disagree. On the other hand, the holistic or eclectic approach focuses attention on the institution itself, and clearly represents a characteristic almost unique to the United States. The university as an institution is a strong administrative unit in the United States, but is not in most of the rest of the world. The absence of a strong national structure for education in the United States has encouraged the college and university to develop more independently than would have been the case in other circumstances. In addition, the holistic approach has the potential of permitting a confusion between primary functions and supporting functions in the description of the quality of a university. For example, even though handsome physical facilities are nice to have, they cannot substitute for an inadequate faculty. The quantitative approach might well suffer the same potential

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[3]The most recent and extensive such report is the five volume set entitled An Assessment of Research-Doctorate Programs in the United States. Edited by Lyle V. Jones, Gardner Lindzey, and Porter E. Coggeshall (Washington, D. C.: National Academy Press, 1982).

disability. Nonetheless, perhaps because of my familiarity with higher education in the United States, I lean toward understanding "quality" in higher education as it is seen by those who subscribe to the holistic or eclectic approach to its assessment. The approach, then, must include elements of both the reputational and the quantitative methods, for it is indeed a multi-dimensional approach. To reiterate, in this paper I use "quality in higher education" to refer to a complex of descriptors of essential characteristics of specific institutional types that can be viewed at varying levels of excellence.

The discussion now turns to an examination of institutional characteristics, characteristics through which excellence might well be observed in universities.

General Characteristics of Excellence in Universities

Can we, then, identify a set of characteristics that might assist in the description of an institution's quality? It will be necessary to consider prestigeful institutions, those of high repute, and to identify characteristics that can be measured if we are to speak to this issue. A partial review of the literature that deals with the quality question as well as an examination of institutions of high repute suggest that four general categories of characteristics can be identified for this purpose. High quality universities will, I propose, be characterized by clarity of purpose, by high degrees of autonomy, by outstanding people, and by generous resources. This four point rubric suggests that a university of high quality will demonstrate by its behavior that knowledge is its ultimate purpose, that "knowledge work" requires high degrees of self-direction

(autonomy) at many levels, that "knowledge work" is accomplished only through a specially trained and committed group of people, and that "knowledge work" is relatively expensive. Although it is neither necessary nor appropriate to specify specific standards or norms for these characteristics, it is necessary and appropriate to describe in modest detail the meaning and scope of each, and to suggest something about means of estimation.

First let us consider the awareness of all concerned parties of the purposes of an institution of higher education. By "purposes" I mean to include all those direction-giving formal statements of goals, objectives, traditions, and operating principles that exist within the structure of a university. I do not mean to suggest that such formalized statements exhaust the direction-giving forces in an institution, for cultural factors, laws and statutes, economic conditions, as well as political realities also function in this domain. The "purposing" that provides direction for a university can also be understood as a complex collection of elements that is as extensive as the number of individuals who comprise its faculty. These sources of complexity, both internal and external to individual institutions, contribute to the confusion that exists concerning the purpose of universities.

In spite of such difficulties, it is necessary that a university operate with a set of purposes that are limited and focused enough to be readily communicated to and understood by the members of the university community, ideally the students, the staff, the faculty, the alumni, the board of control, the citizens of the university's local community, and

the appropriate political leadership segments. The key concept in such a set is knowledge.[4] Universities have been established historically as citadels of knowledge charged with its maintenance, regularization, and transmission. Understanding of this primary and essential purpose is not difficult to achieve, but securing agreement to a more specific set of objectives through which this grand purpose can be operationalized is a different matter, one that causes continuous contention and stress within an institution. Nonetheless, such a set must properly describe the scope of advanced levels of instruction and scholarship, the two unique services to a society that can scarcely be provided by other social agencies. The specific objectives that permit the implementation of these two great dimensions of the knowledge purpose must describe the range and scope of programs of instruction and research. Even though it is predictable that contests regarding the relative merits of competing objectives will be vigorous, it is still necessary that an acceptable level of agreement be maintained within the institution so as to ensure its viability and its future.

A "level of agreement" becomes one focus of assessments of quality. This dimension of the institution's quality may be viewed as demonstrating the clarity with which the university's purposes are understood by its constituents. The agreement must be based broadly enough to permit the many and varied segments of the institution to operate with little

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[4]Burton R. Clark, The Higher Education System: Academic Organization in Cross-National Perspective. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983). 11.

inhibition. I do not intend to imply that agreement as an evidence of purpose clarity connotes support for all aspects of the direction-giving purposes and objectives. Nor is the intention to suggest that all purposes and objectives can be articulated by all members of the university's community. Such agreement does, however, at whatever level it achieves, indicate the presence of an environment in which "knowledge work" can be conducted successfully, and hence, becomes an indication of a level of quality. Without a condition of agreement and hence purpose clarity, a condition made possible by the mutual respect members of the institution must demonstrate, the university will suffer, its services will be unnecessarily limited, and its "quality" lowered.

It is the position of this paper that one antidote for this form of quality problem is found in activities designed to clarify the purposes/goals/objectives that translate the "knowledge function" into "knowledge work." This becomes an especially difficult task in view of the many academic sub-cultures that characterize the university and their consequent symbolic separateness.[5] To detail corrective activities goes beyond the scope of the present paper. Nonetheless, it is possible to estimate the degree of clarity of an institution's purposes by examining the awareness evidenced by the leaders of the society as well as faculty and students, and by searching for levels of agreement.

The second quality factor that I would suggest is the autonomy that

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[5] Ibid., p. 92.

the university enjoys.[6] For our purposes, "autonomy" describes the characteristic that enables the professors and students of a given university to pursue questions of interest within their areas of study and research without any imposed doctrinal or political limitations. In academic cicles, this characteristic is frequently called the freedom of the faculty to pursue truth wherever it leads and to publish the findings of that pursuit in the lecture hall and professional journals, quite simply, academic freedom.

In analyses of higher education, "autonomy" of necessity refers to the formal and informal relationships that exist between a university and its supporting society.[7] More specifically it describes the degree of initiative that may be exercised by officials of the institutions in operational matters as well as the discretion afforded to individual members of the faculty. It describes the degree of independence with which an institution may act. Such freedom of action is not simply a special privilege afforded a select institution or a special class of intellectual workers. Rather, both the academic world--the world of intellectual culture--and the society that supports a higher education system so structured and safeguarded are the benefactors of the unfettered search for truth. The potential contributions made by such searches and of programs of advanced education fertilized by the same commitments are in the broader

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[6]John S. Brubacher, On the Philosophy of Higher Education. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1982). 26-38.

[7]Clark, op. cit. pp. 125-133.

interests of human society writ large, for they represent mankind's best means of pushing back the boundaries of ignorance.

Autonomy, then, can be understood in both institutional and individual terms. The institution's autonomy varies with the levels of control imposed on it by multi-institutional system governance bodies or by ministerial and other governmental bureaus. Budgetary control levels represent a key index of the level of autonomy enjoyed by an institution.[8] As important as this factor is, the level of autonomy enjoyed by individual professors is even more critical in the quality of "knowledge work." A productive joust with the processes of instruction or research must be an intellectually open experience. That is to say, the accomplishment of the primary mission for which the university is established requires an open environment, an environment uncluttered by repressive statutes, regulations, or traditions.

The society that establishes and supports universities, the society that encourages its bright young people to study in universities, such a society must also be the source of the autonomy of its universities. The society, through its government, guarantees to the university autonomy adequate enough to ensure that its faculty members and students have the freedom required by "knowledge work." If such provisions are not regularized through governmental procedures and legitimatized throughout the society by its value structure, the contribution of higher education can scarcely exceed the quality-levels of successful programs of indoctrination.

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[8]Paul L. Dressel, "Higher Education in the Age of Financial Difficulties," Comparative Approaches to Higher Education. (Hiroshima City, Japan: Research Institute for Higher Education, Hiroshima University, Dec. 1983): 229-240.

Of course, the degree and nature of the autonomy enjoyed by the university does of necessity vary from society to society. Different cultural traditions have evolved different ways of providing the required autonomy, the autonomy that ensures the continuous search for truth.

Universities can be examined in terms of the degree to which this characteristic of "quality" is present within their routine operations. One implication, however, is clear: the quality of a university improves as its autonomy flourishes, for autonomy of action is the condition necessary to achieving its central purpose. The concerned administrator or faculty member may examine the practices of members of a university's community to identify the degree of autonomy that it has acquired. If, for example, "clearances" are either required or expected by individuals before initiating an action that might be viewed as controversial, it can be assumed that the autonomy of the institution is limited and that the quality of the university has been compromised. If, on the other hand, professors regularly pursue their own research interests without fear of reprisal or pecuniary penalty, it can be assumed that the university operates with an adequate level of autonomy, and that this dimension of its quality is acceptable.

The third category of quality characteristics focuses attention on the <u>people</u> of the enterprise, the faculty members, the students, and the administrative-support staff. Evidence is clear in support of the idea that the individuals who comprise the university are the key to the level of quality it achieves. Recently, Peters and Waterman, in their popular treatise on excellence in business enterprises, devoted much attention to

the essential nature of human dimension in successful corporations,[9] as have other students of organization and administration too numerous to mention in this context. The achievements of universities are the achievements of individuals and small groups of individuals. Academic reputations are made by professors and students (usually graduate students) working in disciplines. Institutional reputations are made through achievements of students. And both of these central contributions to quality (at least as recognized by informed academicians) are enabled by individuals who occupy leadership and support staff positions in the institutions. The university is an organization of individuals involved in what I have called "knowledge work," and the quality of their work becomes the center-piece in the quality of the institution.

Evidences of faculty quality can be observed in such characteristics as the level and depth of the preparation of each professor, the records of knowledge production (scholarly contributions) and knowledge transmission (primarily formal instructional activities), recognitions of contributions to one's discipline, and participation in the application of useful knowledge to society's pressing needs. Each of these characteristics can be quantified as a partial index of faculty quality, but each also requires the application of judgment as well. An additional characteristic pertinent to the quality level of a professor's contribution can be described as commitment, commitment to "knowledge work" and, hence, his/her field of study, and commitment to the university through which the work takes place. This is a difficult

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[9]Thomas J. Peters and Robert H. Waterman, Jr., In Search of Excellence. New York: Harper & Row, 1982): 55-86.

characteristic both to describe and to measure. One sure indication, however, is the amount of time an individual devotes to the university-centered work. The part-time professor must accommodate multiple loyalties, and simply cannot live as committed a professorial role as can one who does not have competing loyalties. Faculty quality suffers when a significant proportion of its membership is part-time. This condition appears to be a growing problem in some segments of higher education in the United States, and has become relatively common in other nations of the hemisphere.

The largest human element in the university is, of course, the student body. Some observers hold that the quality of a university (or of a two-year or short-cycle institution for that matter) cannot rise above the level of the students it attracts. In institutions that prize the knowledge transmission purpose primarily, that is certainly the case. It is true, also, for a large segment of the public as far as the general reputation of the institution is concerned. It is important to consider the characteristics of the student body if one wishes to understand the quality of a university. The strength of the student body can be gauged through examining such quantitative measures as admission-retention-graduation standards, performance on standardized tests of ability and achievement, and so forth. Additional types of information may also be considered; for example, the amount of growth in academic competencies demonstrated by students over the duration of their study, the relationship between the strength of students and the objectives of the several programs, the ability of the students to demonstrate high level cognitive skills, and the sensitivity of students to the values and needs of their

society. All such information might well be considered as elements in the description of student characteristics as one dimension of the quality of the university.

Administrative and support-staff groups are essential to the successful accomplishment of an institution's goals, and consequently contribute in no small measure to its quality. The means of assessing the level of their contribution are readily available through contemporary personnel administration literature and need not be discussed here. But the importance of the relationship between their work and the institution's quality must not be slighted.

The fourth characteristic of quality deals with resource availability and can be called generous support, which can be understood as the provision of the resources required by the people of the university to accomplish its "knowledge work." The level of fiscal resources made available to the institution is another element critical to the determination of the quality to which the university can aspire. Some observers believe that this is the key factor, for, they say, poverty seldom enables great things to be accomplished on a broad scale. Seldom can one find an impoverished academic department or university that is listed among the world's leading academic units or institutions. Nonetheless, generous financial resources alone cannot assure excellence, for intellectual and cultural impoverishment can be observed in the midst of material plenty. Generous support is a precondition, a necessary condition, but not a sufficient condition to high levels of quality in university services, and, as such, must be given serious consideration.

How much is "sufficient" is difficult to determine, and must vary from department-to-department, from institution-to institution, from society-to-society, and from time-to-time. A significant factor to consider is the relationship of the level of support to the knowledge based needs of the faculty as determined by the agreed upon objectives for instruction and research. An additional conditioning factor is the total amount of money available for allocation by the sponsoring society through its government and the competition among public services for such moneys. A comparative index is seldom helpful. That is to say, for example, because a prestigious institution in one society or culture invests a given amount of money per student or per academic department is no reason to expect that another institution in the same or a different society should invest the same amount per student with the expectation that such action will produce excellence. Rather, the definition of sufficient resources needed to equal a "generous" level must be conditioned by cultural factors and institutional purposes. Hence, "quality" among universities remains in large part to be determined in accordance with the dynamics of the sponsoring society.

To summarize thus far, then, I have suggested that the quality of a university may be estimated by examining prestigeful institutions based on reputational studies, by quantitative descriptions of selected institutional characteristics, or by an extension of both methods in what has been called an eclectic or holistic approach. Regardless of the method selected, criteria must be identified for examination. Four categories have been suggested. In addition, I would suggest that developing estimates of the

quality of a single institution, regardless of its classification, should be considered a longitudinal task in which growth toward higher orders of the achievement of institutional goals can be observed over a period of years. In this way, the question of quality becomes a more nearly productive concern.

Administrative Impacts on Quality

Can we extrapolate some generalizations concerning the relationship between quality and administration? Four quality factors have been identified: purpose/goal clarity, autonomy, the people, and resources. These four factors of quality encourage us to consider potential impacts on institutional quality of administrative behavior.

Inasmuch as the administrator operates in and through an organization, let us first consider internal structures and quality. It appears reasonable to assume that the growing middle and campus-wide levels of organization that are apparent in American universities and emergent in other lands, raise questions about an increasing potential for constraints on the autonomy of the professor in the laboratory, the study, and the lecture hall.[10] If such a trend continues, the continued improvement in the quality of the university is problematic, as a confusion of purposes is a predictable consequence. And, too often, administrators contribute to this expansion in middle-levels of management. The issue seems to revolve around the organizational distance between the policy-decision level and the academician, and the expansion of the administrative cadre imposed between

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[10]Clark, op. cit., p. 129.

the two levels with the consequent dilution of the autonomy of the academician. The primary operative in the knowledge preservation, transmission, and expansion business is made less self-reliant and hence, less productive by a diminution of his/her autonomy.

Institutional size and complexity are two internal factors that appear to be related to quality by impacting directly on the internal flexibility (and autonomy) available to the academic faculty. Administrators then, might be well advised to keep the university and its sub-units as small and its organizational structure as simple and loosely coupled as conditions permit. Administrators have opportunities to contribute positively to such developments at all levels of education and in all types of educational systems, and this is especially true in higher education.

It is clear that a similar dynamic is at work in the relationship between the institution and its government. That is, more levels of control or coordination have been established producing greater organizational distance between the level of operation and the level of decision. By looking at the total structure, internal and external, it is clear that many hierarchical levels function between the instructional and scholarly work of the professor and resource allocation decisions, and that the professor is progressively less able to influence those and other important decision activities.

What does this do to the quality factors? Regarding the autonomy of the institution, the administrative overlays impose restrictions and, hence, limitations. It might be argued that such actions can potentially aid in improving "quality" by insisting on the elimination of weak and non-contributing

programs and utilization of high standards in all aspects of the university's work. On the other hand, undue restrictions inevitably produce an environment characterized by lethargy and avoidance, quite the opposite of characteristics needed to produce discovery and innovation. The clarity of purposes and goals might well be enhanced through a more controlled governance and administrative structure, although it is recognized that confusion often results when several administrative layers develop interpretations of general goals and objectives.

The quality of the people involved should not be significantly impacted by a tiered bureaucratic structure, assuming that the primary personnel decisions remain at the department level. Unfortunately, this assumption is difficult to support, for idiosyncratic administrative decisions and nepotistic personnel appointments are too often the regular pattern of organizational behavior rather than the exception, especially in systems that treat academics as civil servants and in those that rely on part-time professors.

The impact on resource availability should be favorable inasmuch as the government itself will be better informed and more influential in the utilization of the resources. It must be noted, however, that the addition of levels of specialized administrative staff required by the bureaucratic structure imposes additional demands on resources and may, in operation, result in lesser amounts actually reaching the basic levels of the university.

The conclusion that seems appropriate is that the impact of administrative practice on quality factors in both internal and external actions

can be either favorable or unfavorable depending on decisions taken. It seems clear that removing decisions regarding academic matters from the operational levels (i.e., individual professor and department) introduces non-academic factors that have a potential for negative consequences; imposing intermediate layers of administrative offices becomes the source of non-academic factors, contributing more to cumbersomeness than to quality.

There are specific values and behaviors that individuals committed to a stewardship of "knowledge work" can incorporate to help in operationalizing the knowledge purpose. I call to your attention some behavioral requisites pertinent to the administration of "quality" university departments and colleges, and other levels of educational systems. I suggest five characteristics of the administrator who would move his or her university toward higher levels of quality. This administrator would be action-oriented, a decision-maker, objective in the broad-view sense, authentic, and tolerant.[11] He or she would not shy away from taking initiatives that produce information pertinent to on-going tasks, nor would this administrator hide from difficult decisions, thereby limiting the anxiety-producing actions so detrimental to professorial productivity. His or her objectivity (by which I mean impersonal rationalism) focuses attention on both the short and long range consequences of recommended actions as well as on personal needs of involved individuals. The authentic administrator is one who behaves without posturing and falsehoods, not fearing to face the truth of issues and events. And finally, the

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[11] William G. Monahan and Herbert R. Hengst, Contemporary Educational Administration. (New York: Macmillan, 1982): 320.

tolerant administrator recognizes and insists on the freedom of the other individuals involved in the knowledge business while recognizing that such freedom imposes no limits on his or her own.

Quality can be improved in our universities--through a recognition of purposes that enhance the knowledge focus of academic departments, through ensuring the requisite freedom to deal with knowledge issues, by encouraging the people to enhance their personal commitment to the development and application of knowledge, and by securing a level of resources sufficient to operate institutions dedicated to the knowledge of our race and universe.

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